

NEW YORK TIMES

4 JUNE 1982

China Frees American Woman Accused of Spying

PEKING, June 3 (AP) — An American woman who was detained for seven days after being accused of spying against China was released today and given 48 hours to leave the country.

A source in Peking said China had solid evidence against Lisa Wichser, 28 years old, of Denver, Colo., and was releasing her only to avoid aggravating relations with the United States.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said: "Considering that Lisa Wichser has made a confession of the crimes she had committed and pleaded for leniency, our public security authorities have decided to release her. She is ordered to leave China within 48 hours."

She was expected to fly to New York via Tokyo on Friday.

Miss Wichser, returning to her apart-

ment at the Friendship Hotel here, did not comment on the accusations or reports that she had confessed.

But a United States Embassy spokesman, Mark Crocker, said that the embassy considered her not guilty and that "we're not certain what she is supposed to be guilty of."

Miss Wichser said: "I have always been a friend of China and will continue to be a friend of the Chinese people. I'm looking forward to going home to see my parents. I talked to them tonight."

She later told a neighbor: "I can't wait to go home. I am really sorry if this incident gets my friends in trouble."

She said she had been left alone for three days in solitary confinement, the neighbor reported.

Miss Wichser had taught English in Peking for the last two years and was also was doing research on Chinese communes. Western diplomatic sources said she had admitted having internal documents, routine papers on agricultural policy. In China anything not officially made public is considered a state secret, even documents most nations would consider innocuous.

The American had been engaged to marry a Chinese student and had received permission from her school, but he had not received approval from his, foreign sources close to the couple said.

The Foreign Ministry has not spelled out Miss Wichser's crimes, but the police have said privately that she was a spy and had worked for the Central Intelligence Agency.